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on an arm which is clamped under the collar of the draw-tube, and carries a second movable arm resting in a collar to support the camera. This arm is held in place by a thumb-screw, and it may be set at any point on the vertical rod. When the Zeiss *a.a.* objective is used, and the camera is lowered as much as possible, an image magnified about three diameters is projected on to the paper, and any amplification greater than three diameters may be obtained by varying the height of the camera, and by the use of the higher objectives.

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SCIENTIFIC NEWS.¹

— One of the most remarkable salt formations in the world is located on the Isle of Petit Anse, Southwestern Louisiana, 125 miles due west from New Orleans. It is owned by the Avery family. This singular salt deposit is sufficiently unknown to bear the light of a more thorough investigation than it has had. The deposit is pure crystal salt. So far as it has been traced, there are 150 acres of unknown depth, explored 140 feet down. The surface of the bed undulates from one foot above to six below tide-level. The earth covering the salt ranges from ten to twenty-three feet in depth, but one hill rises 183 feet above, showing that an after-formation took place. On the top of the salt, beneath the earth, have been found the remains of the mastodon, mammoth sloth, horse (*Equus fraternus*), tusks and bones intermixed with Indian relics such as arrow and spear points, tomahawk heads, paint pots, mortar and pestle and pottery of all kinds. The dip of the salt is eight degrees. There is a deposit of pink sandstone quite decomposed, a coal formation thirteen to seventeen feet thick and seventy-two per cent carbon, the lignite cropping out a hundred feet above the sea. Over the salt come pink and yellow clay beds, then the sandstone and then the clay, each stratum trending towards the north. There are also sulphur springs. The salt is a conglomerate mass of crystallizations, which in the mine look like dark salt, but when exposed to the light are seen to be white. By analyses the salt is $99\frac{88}{100}$ per cent pure; the remaining $\frac{2}{5}$ is made up of sulphate and chloride of calcium. The position of the salt shows it to be older than the coal and sandstone which lie above it, and also the mastodon and contemporary prehistoric mammals. The deposit was discovered in 1862 while a well was being excavated. It was seized by Jefferson Davis and afterward by Admiral Farragut. It is now worked by a New York concern which pays the Averys \$5000 per month royalty. To show the value of land here, it may be stated that a single acre, on which grow little peppers, yields a clear profit of \$10,000 per year on the well-known Tobasco table sauce.

¹ Edited by WM. HOSEA BALLOU, 265 Broadway, New York.

— Dr. Isaac Lea, the distinguished conchologist of Philadelphia died recently at an advanced age. He was born in Philadelphia, and during his earlier life was engaged in business as a bookseller. His interest in science was however always great, and he retired from business early with a competence, and devoted himself to his favorite pursuit. His specialty was conchology, and in this field his publications, on both recent and extinct forms, are numerous and well known. He was for several years president of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, and was an honorary member of the numerous illustrious societies, including the most important scientific bodies of England, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, Greece, India and Russia. He entertained 200 members of the British Association at his Long Branch villa in 1884.

— The “hog mice” referred to by Mr. Aldrich in “A curious superstition,” on p. 744 of the present volume, are apparently the shrews, concerning which superstitions of the same character were formerly common in England. References to the belief that these animals would cause injury to the foot of man or beast over which they passed, may be found in Bell’s “British Quadrupeds,” and White’s “Natural History of Selborne,” where may also be found some curious remedies for the lameness resulting.—*J. S. K.*

— At the recent meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science at Birmingham, the following appropriations for biological research were made: Lymphatic system, £25; Naples zoölogical station, £100; Plymouth biological station, £50; Granton biological station, £75; Zoölogical Record, £100; flora of China, £75; flora and fauna of the Cameroons, £75; Migration of birds, £30; British marine area, £5. The number attending the meeting was about 2500.

— One will have to go far to find a more delicious bit of nonsense than is contained in the following title of an article which appears in one of the scientific journals: “The identification of the British inch as the unit of measure of the Mound-builders of the Ohio valley.” The publication committee must have been napping when this article was accepted.

— Dr. Baur, of the Yale College Peabody Museum narrowly escaped serious injury recently by the explosion of a decomposed ostrich egg. The sudden escape of the confined gas knocked him senseless, but as the egg was wrapped in a cloth his eyes happily escaped injury. That the doctor had to submit to a disinfection afterwards will surprise no one.

— The species of tree moss, *Ursea barbata*, grows to a considerable length on the south shore of Lake Superior. Specimens re-

cently added to the collection at the Northwestern University, Evanston, were four feet long. The moss trails from the limbs *a la* the parasitic "Spanish moss" of the South. It is of a beautiful pea-green color.

— The streams penetrating the Gogebic Iron range, near the south shore of Lake Superior, are so black with discoloration from the ore, that fish can not live in them. This is particularly true of the Montreal river, the northern State line between Wisconsin and Michigan.

— Professor Henry L. Osborne, of Lafayette, Indiana, has taken the position of editor of the American Monthly Microscopical Journal, during the absence of Mr. Hitchcock in Japan. We look for an improvement in the journal.

— Mr. J. A. McNeil, of Binghamton, N. Y., offers for sale forty pieces of pottery in one-half bbl., seventy-five pieces pottery and fifty stone implements in bbl. These are far above the average in style and desirability.

— The k. k. Naturhistorischen Hof-museum in Vienna has begun the publication of its annals, the first and second numbers of Vol. I having appeared.

— A single gill-net in use among the Apostle islands, in Lake Superior, is three miles long and requires an entire day to empty and set it.

— A portrait of Hermann Schlegel, of Leiden, may be found in the Altenburg Mittheilungen for 1886.

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PROCEEDINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES held its autumn meeting at Boston, Mass., commencing November 9. The following papers were read:

November 9th:

The solar-Lunar spectrum, by S. P. Langley; A basis of chemistry, by T. Sterry Hunt; On lemurine reversion in human dentition, by E. D. Cope; On the columella auris of the tailed Batrachia, by E. D. Cope; Change in *Mya* since the Pliocene, by Edward S. Morse; The Cave Fauna of North America, with remarks on the anatomy and origin of blind forms, by A. S. Packard.

November 10th:

Primitive forms of Cephalopoda, by Alpheus Hyatt; A case of evolution in the migration of forms, by Alpheus Hyatt; Lituities of the limestones of Phillipsburg, Canada, by Alpheus Hyatt; A chart of the stars in the group *Præsepe*, by C. H. F. Peters; A catalogue of stars from positions in various astronomical periodicals, by C. H. F. Peters; A catalogue of bright lines observed in the atmosphere of β Lyræ, by O. T. Sherman; On the relative motions of the Pleiades group deduced from measurements made with the Königsberg and Yale College heliometers, by W. L. Elkin.